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A NOTE ON CHAPMAN

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS :—In Chapman's comedy, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, there is a passage, eleven lines in length,¹ which recalls very strongly Marlowe's lyric, *The Passionate Shepherd to his Love*. Certain lines also suggest an indebtedness to *The Bait*, Donne's imitation of Marlowe's poem. The last-mentioned must have been written not later than June 1, 1593, and Donne's probably was an early one (about 1593), so it is safe to presume Chapman the debtor.

Chapman's lines, which occur in the courtship of the Princess Aspasia by the disguised Count Cleanthes, begin with an invitation—

" . . . Come, sweet love, . . . ,"

and are followed by a short summing up of the pleasures which the two would enjoy together—singing, angling, love-making, and Aspasia's adornment by him with pebbles brought by him from the "murmuring springs." The poem concludes with a final invitation—

"Say, sweet Aspasia, wilt thou walk with me?"

Marlowe follows the same general order in his poem : first, an invitation, then promises of music, and of various sorts of adornment, appropriately rustic, and finally he concludes with

"Then live with me and be my love."

The two poems (for Chapman's lines seem an interpolation in the play) must be compared by the student, however, for the really striking resemblance between them to be appreciated fully.

The likeness to Donne's poem consists principally in the use of angling as one of the inducements which Cleanthes holds out to Aspasia. *The Bait*, itself, seems merely an adaptation of the plan of *The Passionate Shepherd* to angling.

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THE NEW CHAUCER ITEM

To the Editors of the *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS :—In my article of the last number of the *Notes*, p. 20, the reference to the compensation for the Prince of Wales should read "ten pounds a day," instead of "one pound a day." The time of seventy-five days is the important part of the allusion and, as I was reserving the quotation from Delachenal for a longer paper on the general subject, I did not have it before me when I wrote. Ten pounds a day, equivalent to 160 pounds now, or about \$800, is a more princely allowance.

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BRIEF MENTION

The first three volumes of Dr. H. Oskar Sommer's *Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances* (The Carnegie Institution of Washington, D. C.) have now appeared. Vol. I contains *L'Estoire del Saint Graal*—that is, the romance which has been commonly called (without manuscript authority) the *Grand St. Graal* and which has been already edited from other MSS. by Furnivall and Hucher, respectively; Vol. II contains the *Merlin*, which Dr. Sommer himself published some years ago, and Vol. III the first part of *Lancelot del Lac*, of which two more parts are yet to come. The final volume of the series is to contain the *Queste del Saint Graal*, which has long been known in Furnivall's edition, and the *Mort Artu*, recently edited by Bruce. It should be explained, perhaps, that Dr. Sommer means by the "Vulgate Version, etc.," the so-called Walter Map cycle of French prose romances—in other words, the five romances modernized by Paulin Paris in his *Romans de la Table Ronde*, 5 vols., Paris, 1868-77. It will be seen from the above statement that all the romances of the series except the *Lancelot*—which, to be sure, in bulk is about equal to the rest put together—have already appeared in print, and many Arthurian scholars will doubtless have the feeling that Dr. Sommer

¹ *Plays of George Chapman*, edited by R. H. Shepherd, page 17.

would have served the cause better, if he had confined himself to the *Lancelot*, devoting to the collation of as many additional *Lancelot* mss. as possible the time which he has actually given to the four other romances. On the other hand, in printing the whole of one of the great cyclic mss. of the series, viz., British Museum ms., Add. 10292-4, he makes it possible, in some degree, to study the work of the scribes and *assembleurs* in fitting the various branches together.

In view of the enormous bulk of these romances, it is perhaps needless to say that the edition is not critical. Dr. Sommer simply prints an exact transcript (without change of punctuation, capitals, etc.) of the above-mentioned British Museum ms., adding a certain number of collations from other mss. at the bottom of the page. In the case of the first two volumes these collations are fairly numerous, but they almost disappear in the third volume. Dr. Sommer has, moreover, by headlines and side-notes made it easy to follow the narrative. In the only branches where as yet comparison is possible—namely, the *Estoire del Saint Graal* and *Mort Artu*—the text of Add. 10292-4 is found to be somewhat condensed, especially so in the *Mort Artu*. This is likely to be true of any great cyclic manuscript in which the attempt is made to include all members of the series. Considerations of time and material would naturally lead the scribes to condense. Only for the two branches mentioned above, however, can one make any positive assertion as yet on the subject. It is probable, moreover, that better mss. of each of the romances in the series will be found at Paris, where mss. of the prose romances are much more numerous than elsewhere. But French scholars have shown no disposition to avail themselves of these treasures, and all students of mediæval literature will be deeply grateful to Dr. Sommer for undertaking the execution of such an immensely laborious task.

In the Introduction to Vol. I, besides a description of the ms. and a table (not altogether complete) of the mss. and early prints of the five romances, we have what is virtually a summary of the editor's views concerning the development of the cycle as already set forth in various philological journals. But to any one who has followed the work of Gaston Paris and E. Wechssler, Dr. Sommer's "discovery" of his famous trilogy is no discovery at all, and his claims on this score are merely matter of astonishment. The whole question, however, has been subjected to a searching examination by E. Brugger in Behrens' *Zeitschrift*, xxxiv (1909), 99 ff.

The Carnegie Institution is to be warmly congratulated on the splendid press-work of these volumes. The misdating of the first two volumes,

however, is inexcusable. All three appeared in 1910, yet Vol. I is dated 1909 and Vol. II, 1908.

J. D. B.

Possibly others beside the present writer, seeing the title of a book by F. Gaiffe, *Le Drame en France au XVIII^e siècle, ouvrage orné de 16 planches hors texte* (Paris, Colin, 1910), have concluded that it is merely a *livre d'étrennes*, a popular account of the theatre in the century of Marivaux, Voltaire and Beaumarchais. In fact, however, it is a valuable scholarly monograph on the form of drama specifically called *drame*. Growing out of the *tragédie bourgeoise* and the *comédie larmoyante*, this form became definite with Diderot's *Fils Naturel* (1757), and had a triumphant career which was cut short by the Revolution. Its chief importance is perhaps social rather than literary, and it produced few works of permanent interest; but it marks a significant stage in the development of the theatre, in connection with the decay of the classic tragedy and comedy. In his book of 600 pages M. Gaiffe exhaustively treats the origin, characteristics, development and influence of the *drame*, with a list of all the plays produced between 1757 and 1791 which conform to his definition,—“a new *genre* created by the philosophical party for the purpose of interesting and preaching to the *bourgeoisie* and the *peuple* by presenting to them a pathetic picture of their own adventures and their own environment.”

K. McK.

In the *Revue de la Renaissance* for 1910, pp. 113-125, Professor John L. Gerig, by an article on *Jean Pelisson de Condrieu*, has added an additional biography to his series of articles on the less known scholars of the sixteenth century. His careful and detailed study is an evidence of how much material for the literary history of the Renaissance still remains to be gleaned from contemporary sources. Professor Gerig is earning the gratitude of students of French by these biographies, which demand much labor but are forming part of a solid foundation for a better understanding of the period.